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FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records

FOURTH COMMITTEE
7th meeting
held on
Thursday, 22 October 1992
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 7th MEETING

Chairman:	Mr. MELENDEZ	(El Salvador)
later:	Mr. MWABUWKUTU (Vice-Chairman)	(United Republic of Tanzania)
later:	Mr. KEMBER (Vice-Chairman)	(New Zealand)

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* Items considered together.

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 18: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (continued) (A/47/23 (Parts II to VII), A/47/225, 391, 506; A/C.4/47/L.2; A/AC.109/1097-1106, 1108-1113, 1116-1120, 1123-1125; S/23299, S/24040 and S/24464)

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AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued) (A/47/3 (chaps. I and V, sect. B); E/1992/85)

AGENDA ITEM 101: OFFERS BY MEMBER STATES OF STUDY AND TRAINING FACILITIES FOR INHABITANTS OF NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES (continued) (A/47/486)

1. Mr. KPAKPO (Benin) said that the international situation, with the advent of democracy and the ending of the cold war, was encouraging for the whole international community, which must seize every opportunity to guarantee peace and security for all. However, that goal would never be achieved as long as people were still under colonial domination and apartheid had not been eliminated in South Africa.

2. It was regrettable that in his report "An agenda for peace" the Secretary-General had not expressed the view that the present situation constituted a threat to peace. Benin hoped to make a contribution to the further improvement of "An agenda for peace".

3. The current international political atmosphere ought to make it easier for the Special Committee on decolonization to discharge its mandate. The Special Committee had the praiseworthy ability to adapt to new circumstances as it sought the most appropriate solutions to the problems of non-self-governing countries. Benin welcomed the results achieved by the members of the Special Committee and would contribute to the efforts to eliminate colonialism in all its forms by 2000.

(Mr. Kpakpo, Benin)

4. His delegation was aware of the progress and positive changes in South Africa but was worried by the atmosphere of violence which continued to reign there. It urged the parties concerned to come to their senses so that a just solution could be found on the basis of the principle of one man, one vote.

5. With regard to the implementation of the Declaration on decolonization, Benin welcomed the progress achieved through the spirit of dialogue and cooperation shown both by the peoples concerned and by the administering Powers. On the question of Western Sahara, his delegation supported any initiative which would help the current negotitations. It thought the present situation in New Caledonia encouraging.

6. The Fourth Committee and the Special Committee could now do their work in a satisfactory manner. Now that the ending of the cold war had eased East-West tensions, the tone was moderate in statements and documents alike.

7. His delegation invited the administering Powers and the Non-Self-Governing Territories to seize the opportunities now offered to achieve settlements acceptable to all sides, so that the Territories would be able to join the concert of nations by 2000.

8. Mr. BOUE (Cuba) said that, while the atmosphere created by the ending of the cold war had been widely welcomed, new and even more formidable obstacles were impeding the decolonization activities of the United Nations, owing in particular to the lack of cooperation shown by certain big Powers and the changed attitude of other States which had been supporters of the colonial peoples but were now accomplices of the colonial Powers. While there was no point in dwelling on the historic role of the United Nations in the decolonization process, it was nevertheless important to emphasize that the process would not be completed as long as a single people remained under the colonial yoke. It must be pointed out that during the past year there had been no positive developments under the heading of decolonization.

9. The United Nations had the necessary machinery to implement the Plan of Action of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, but some people sought to subordinate that machinery to the interests of the colonial Powers, thereby harming the colonial peoples. The Special Committee must renew its dialogue with the colonial Powers but could not do so if many of those Powers refused to cooperate with the United Nations decolonization machinery and sometimes used the principle of cooperation as a means of subjecting the Special Committee to a kind of sordid blackmail. The colonial Powers must continue furnishing the Special Committee with information on the Territories under their administration and stop impeding its activities.

10. The argument was heard in some quarters that it was anachronistic nowadays to worry about colonialism and other related problems such as apartheid and even that the Fourth Committee should be abolished. But surely it was colonialism that was an anachronism. At the threshold of a new

(Mr. Boue, Cuba)

millenium, were not the colonial Powers living in yesterday's world? Some time ago the terms "colonial Powers" and "colonial Territories" had disappeared from the vocabulary of the United Nations decolonization organs. It was now a question of "administering Powers" and "Non-Self-Governing Territories". How did the colonial Powers which used to have vast territories in their grip differ from the Powers which now controlled the destinies of nations of every description? Were the colonialism of yesteryear and contemporary colonialism really different? The colonial peoples, whose culture, traditions and way of life had developed down the years, were subjected to an increasingly rapid process of cultural degradation owing to the introduction of alien values.

11. His delegation denounced foreign investments which were impeding the accession of colonial Territories to independence. The colonial Powers must not permit in the Territories any activity which might vitiate the right of indigenous peoples to self-determination. Nor must they establish in the Territories military bases which now, with the ending of the cold war, could serve no purpose, unless they were aimed against other peoples of the third world.

12. Certain Member States were accusing the Special Committee of drafting repetitive resolutions. The reason for any repetitiveness was that, far from being resolved, the situations denounced in the resolutions were deteriorating steadily from year to year. In order for the Special Committee's decisions or resolutions to stop being repetitive, colonial practices would have to be discontinued and active cooperation with the Special Committee established so that resolution 1514 (XV) might be implemented in respect of all colonial Territories.

13. His delegation welcomed the efforts made by the Special Committee to rationalize its work and improve its efficiency. The Committee had considered all the matters brought before it and was putting forward recommendations concerning the small Territories. It had heard a large number of petitioners from Puerto Rico and had reaffirmed that country's right to self-determination and independence. On the subject of Western Sahara, the Committee had supported the settlement plan approved by the Security Council in its resolutions 658 (1990) and 690 (1991).

14. His delegation was ready to continue its efforts in the service of decolonization.

15. Mr. AL-SHA'ER (United Arab Emirates), recalling the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, said that it was the duty of the United Nations to provide all necessary assistance to the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories in order to enable them to exercise their right to self-determination. As for the administering Powers, their duty was to cooperate with the local authorities so that the inhabitants of the Territories might be informed of available choices concerning the status of the Territories.

(Mr. Al-Sha'er, United Arab Emirates)

16. The activities of certain foreign economic interests, and in particular of transnational corporations, amounted to a veritable plundering of the Non-Self-Governing Territories' natural resources and, like military activities, prevented the peoples of the Territories in question from exercising their right to independence and self-determination.

17. On the question of South Africa he said that his country welcomed the meetings taking place between the leaders of the parties to the conflict and supported the efforts being made to reach agreement and to complete the dismantling of the apartheid system. Dissuasive measures should be taken against certain circles which were seeking to undermine the negotiating process by all possible means.

18. The admission of new Members to the United Nations had gone some way towards consolidating the universality of the Organization, but universality would not be complete until all peoples, including the Palestinian people, were able to exercise their right to self-determination.

19. Mr. QAISER (Pakistan) recalled the role played by the United Nations in the decolonization process and said that the movement of peoples towards freedom and independence could be regarded as the greatest political transition in human history. The right to self-determination was a fundamental and inalienable right which could not be denied to any people under any circumstances. His delegation hoped that the Plan of Action of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism would be implemented in its letter and its spirit.

20. The economic infrastructure and the level of human resource development in Non-Self-Governing Territories were often weak. The fragile character of their economies, often sustained by a single activity linked to the interests of the administering Power, created an overdependence which impeded the movement of those Territories towards independence. It was therefore imperative that their economic base should be broadened and their manpower given appropriate training. The United Nations had a major role to play in that regard. Pakistan was making its own modest contribution to the process of decolonialization by offering scholarships and fellowships to students from a number of Non-Self-Governing Territories.

21. Recalling the special responsibility of the administering Powers towards the Non-Self-Governing Territories, he said that the Department of Public Information of the United Nations should intensify the dissemination of information on the situation in those Territories.

22. Turning to the situation in South Africa, he noted that some progress had been made towards eliminating apartheid. The outbreak of violence which had disrupted the negotiating process was to be deplored. He exhorted the South African Government to shoulder its responsibility by taking steps to stop

(Mr. Qaiser, Pakistan)

further bloodshed and bring to book those responsible for the massacres. The international community should continue to maintain pressure on South Africa until the progress achieved became irreversible.

23. Colonialism was both anachronistic and morally distasteful. His delegation hoped that the world would have rid itself of the practice before the twenty-first century.

24. Mr. Mwabuwkutu (United Republic of Tanzania) took the Chair.

25. Mr. JAMEEL (Bahrain) recalled the principles set forth in the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and stressed the unlawfulness of the exploitation of the natural resources of colonial countries by foreign economic interests. Such activities were inconsistent with the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

26. With regard to South Africa, he welcomed the positive steps taken during the year and expressed the hope that the complete dismantling of apartheid and the restoration of the political and constitutional rights of the black majority would soon be accomplished.

27. Mr. DIARRA (Mali) said that since the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples a number of colonial territories had achieved sovereignty, a positive development for which credit was due to the international community and, in particular, to the General Assembly which had set up the Special Committee on decolonization in order to ensure the implementation of the principles set forth in the Declaration taking into account the specific conditions within each Non-Self-Governing Territory. The Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia had achieved sovereignty and had been admitted to the United Nations. It was to be hoped that the 18 remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories would also be able to pronounce themselves on their future political status.

28. His delegation deplored that the Special Committee on decolonization had been subjected to sharp criticism relating to its very existence and the contents of its terms of reference as well as to the geographical delimitation of its area of activities. In its view, such matters could be considered only within the framework of the General Assembly. The Committee had developed greatly in recent years; an informal consultation group of the Fourth Committee had been set up, and the Special Committee's open-ended working group on the rationalization of its work had made valuable progress in 1991 and 1992. The two Subcommittees had been merged together and an omnibus resolution on 10 Non-Self-Governing Territories had been adopted. The Special Committee was proceeding in a conciliatory manner and endeavouring to eschew confrontation, avoid selective name-calling and streamline the language of draft resolutions and decisions. It had suspended the adoption of decisions

(Mr. Diarra, Mali)

concerning Puerto Rico and Palau in order to encourage the process taking place in those Territories. Some delegations were insisting that the Committee should drop the question of South Africa from its agenda and should refrain from mentioning the presence of military bases in the Non-Self-Governing Territories. Yet to do so would be to abandon the principles underlying the Special Committee's very existence. It was not the situation in Namibia alone that had justified the consideration of the situation in South Africa by the Fourth Committee. The roots of apartheid were to be found in colonialism. Eighty-five per cent of the population of South Africa had not yet exercised their right to self-determination. Some apartheid laws had been repealed and negotiations had been started within the framework of CODESA, but the process would become irreversible only with the coming into power of a multiracial interim government and the convening of a constituent assembly to draft the constitution of the future South Africa. As for the military bases of the administering Powers, their presence in the Non-Self-Governing Territories should neither jeopardize the security of the populations concerned nor constitute a threat of aggression against third countries.

29. He recalled the rights of Non-Self-Governing Territories and the obligations of administering Powers. He strongly encouraged visiting missions, which provided one of the best opportunities to follow developments in the Territories. By its resolution 46/181 concerning the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, the General Assembly had adopted a Plan of Action to give concrete substance to the Decade. In implementation of that resolution, a regional seminar had been held in Grenada in June 1992 to consider the special development needs of island Territories. Such seminars provided an opportunity to meet with the representatives of the Territories and to focus on the specific problems of a particular region. The General Assembly should take into account the conclusions and recommendations of the seminar, which were contained in document A/AC.109/1114. The United Nations should provide representatives of Non-Self-Governing Territories with the means to participate in the work of the Special Committee on decolonization and in the various regional seminars planned during the Decade.

30. In conclusion, he again urged the administering Powers to return to the Special Committee, and noted that New Zealand had not stopped participating in its work despite differences of opinion.

31. Mrs. TAHIR-KHELI (United States of America) said that her Government supported the goals of Chapter XI of the Charter and that it was precisely for that reason that it had been forced to suspend cooperation with the Special Committee on decolonization. Although some progress had been made, the Special Committee continued to cling to an anachronistic and ideological agenda (South Africa, apartheid and the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands) and persisted in using outmoded rhetoric. The draft resolution on foreign economic interests was one example. The draft resolution on the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands contravened chapters XII and XIII of the United Nations Charter, which established the jurisdiction of the Trusteeship Council on the matter.

(Mrs. Tahir-Kheli, United States)

32. The Fourth Committee therefore should scrutinize the texts submitted by the Special Committee on decolonization and produce resolutions consistent with its mandate and with the advances in the world and the United Nations system. Her delegation would offer detailed suggestions in that regard.

33. Mr. SNOUSSI (Morocco) said that his country always had been very willing to cooperate fully with the Secretary-General of the United Nations in seeking a just and lasting solution to the question [of Western Sahara], since it was at its request that the very principle of a referendum had been accepted and that the United Nations had been entrusted with the task of organizing and supervising the referendum. As a result of his country's cooperation, the agreement in principle of 1988 had established the general framework for the operation and the relevant Security Council resolutions had established the settlement plan and the implementation regulations. Similarly, it was as a result of his country's desire for peace that decisive progress had been made and given substance, in particular by the establishment of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), the announcement of the cease-fire on 6 September 1991 and the finalization of all the regulations necessary for the actual conduct of the referendum.

34. Citing passages from the report of the Secretary-General (S/23299) in support of his argument, he said that there was absolutely no doubt that any delay in the implementation of the settlement plan was attributable to delaying tactics which could in no way be blamed on his country. His country had never failed to reaffirm its determination to continue cooperating with the Secretary-General with a view to the timely implementation of the settlement plan.

35. As a law-abiding nation, his country had always been known for its secular traditions of generosity, kindness and tolerance. The amnesty extended to many of those who had taken up arms against his country was the best proof of that fact, and there was no need to list the names of all the leaders of the other party who had recently returned to their country and had, naturally, been integrated into the life of the nation.

36. Ms. KLEOPAS (Cyprus) said that the end of the cold war and the rapid changes in the international political scene were developments that should encourage the international community to work consistently towards the elimination of colonialism by the year 2000.

37. The Special Committee on decolonization had made a considerable effort to adjust its methods of work to new situations. Its decision to merge its two subcommittees and to produce a single resolution on 10 of the 18 Non-Self-Governing Territories remaining on its agenda certainly were steps in the right direction. The Special Committee also had made every effort to focus its attention on the particular needs of the Non-Self-Governing Territories and to improve its relations with the administering Powers, without whose cooperation the decolonization process could not be brought to a

(Ms. Kleopas, Cyprus)

successful conclusion. However, that change in approach and working methods should not result in a change in the Special Committee's mandate, which was to promote the right to self-determination until colonialism had been eliminated.

38. With regard to Western Sahara, her country supported the speedy and full implementation of the settlement plan and the holding of the referendum as envisaged by the relevant Security Council resolutions. An important contribution to that objective would be the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus, since it contained all the elements for a just and lasting solution to the problem.

39. Mr. KIM Jae Hon (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) said that since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) in 1960, the United Nations and the international community had made considerable progress towards the elimination of colonialism and racism, and that more than 80 colonial countries and other dependent Territories had attained independence and become Members of the United Nations. The Committee on Decolonization deserved praise for its strenuous efforts.

40. Nevertheless, much remained to be done, for many peoples still lived under colonial domination and were deprived of their inalienable right to self-determination and independence. Some colonial Powers, disregarding the resolutions and decisions adopted by United Nations bodies, maintained military bases in small Territories, posing a threat to peace and security. Those bases should be dismantled in order to enable the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples to be implemented as soon as possible.

41. The activities of foreign economic interests also were a matter of grave concern. The United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement and other international organizations had called on the interests concerned to discontinue their activities, which were detrimental to the peoples of the Territories. However, those interests continued to exploit the natural resources of the Territories, which would need them for economic growth after they had attained independence. Such activities constituted a direct violation of the right of the inhabitants of the Territories to the use of their natural resources.

42. The international community had to redouble its efforts and take concerted action to eradicate colonialism by the year 2000. The administering Powers should honour the United Nations resolutions and decisions and fulfil their obligations. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea was committed to the eradication of colonialism and racism and to cooperation with the international community to that end. It reaffirmed its solidarity with the liberation movements and peoples struggling to exercise the right to national self-determination and independence.

43. Mr. BAAH (Ghana) said that, with the end of the cold war and the instability of the international situation, priority must be given to decolonization, and efforts should not be slackened on the pretext that that task had practically been completed. The granting of independence to the remaining 18 Territories still under the colonial yoke should be hastened, and he welcomed in that regard the initiatives taken by the Special Committee on decolonization.

44. Regarding the rationalization of the work of the Special Committee and the Fourth Committee, his delegation welcomed the decision to produce an omnibus resolution covering 10 Non-Self-Governing Territories. It also welcomed the reduction in the duration of the general debate and hoped that all delegations would cooperate to ensure the expeditious dispatch of the business of the Committee.

45. On the question of Western Sahara, he reiterated his country's support for the United Nations settlement plan as endorsed by the Security Council. Ghana supported the appeal to the parties to abide by the terms of the cease-fire, supported the activities of MINURSO and appreciated the iniatives of the Secretary-General and his representative in the region. He called on all parties to work towards the holding of a referendum for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara under the supervision of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity.

46. On the question of apartheid, he noted with satisfaction the decision of the Special Committee not to delete mention of apartheid in its recommendation, since the international community ought to continue to express its abhorrence of apartheid. Positive changes had taken place in South Africa in recent months, but it was necessary for negotiations to resume, and the Special Committee ought therefore to follow the situation in that country closely in order to submit appropriate recommendations to the General Assembly.

47. With regard to economic activities in the Non-Self-Governing Territories, it was of the utmost importance to grant the Non-Self-Governing Territories sufficient means to enable them to exercise their right to self-determination in accordance with resolution 1514 (XV). The United Nations and the administering Powers should prevent any wanton exploitation of the natural resources of those Territories and ensure that the profits accruing from such economic activity were directed towards the advancement of the peoples of the Territories.

48. Ms. LEONCE (Saint Lucia) said that her country, which had undergone the decolonization process, achieving independence, with the support and oversight of the United Nations, was well informed on the issue of self-determination. Furthermore, Saint Lucia had played an active role in the formulation of the Plan of Action for the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. The dramatic progress achieved in the decolonization process should not be taken as justification to slacken efforts to eliminate colonialism. She concurred with the States members of the South Pacific Forum

(Ms. Leonce, Saint Lucia)

that a strong Fourth Committee and Special Committee were crucial to eradicating colonialism by the year 2000. The decolonization process had not ended with the independence of Namibia, and that process must take on a new form to address the unique development needs of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories, which were mostly small island developing countries. Efforts should also be redoubled to ensure the implementation of all the provisions of the resolutions which served as a blueprint for a successful decolonization process.

49. As called for by their representatives at the June 1992 Decolonization Seminar held at Grenada, efforts must be made to increase the participation of the Non-Self-Governing Territories in the activities of the United Nations system and in other regional and international bodies, because such activities were important to political and constitutional advancement. Accordingly, Saint Lucia supported the participation of the representatives of the elected Governments of the Non-Self-Governing Territories in the work of the Fourth Committee and the Special Committee. With regard to participation in regional organizations, the Caribbean Community had admitted the British Virgin Islands and the Turks and Caicos Islands as associate members in 1991 and had granted observer status to the Governments of Anguilla, Bermuda and the Cayman Islands. With respect to the United Nations system, Saint Lucia continued to work closely with many Non-Self-Governing Territories in the region of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), in which they held associate membership.

50. Saint Lucia endeavoured to promote the expanded participation of Non-Self-Governing Territories in programmes and activities of the United Nations system and in that connection supported the recommendation of the 1992 Decolonization Seminar favouring assistance by the Special Committee to the Working Group of Non-Independent Countries of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee. In conclusion, she reaffirmed the continued applicability to the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories of the principles of self-determination as contained in the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council.

51. Mr. GRIFFIN (Australia) said that rationalization of the work of the Committee, against the backdrop of the restructuring of the United Nations system, was all the more important because most of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories were island communities in the South Pacific and the Caribbean whose particular circumstances were of particular concern to Australia, which had continued to play an active role in support of the decolonization process, because it was conscious of the implications any failure to reform working methods would have for a number of its neighbours in the South Pacific.

(Mr. Griffin, Australia)

52. The adoption by the forty-sixth session of an omnibus resolution addressing the concrete needs and circumstances of the small Territories had been an important achievement, and every effort must be made to ensure that that resolution was adopted by consensus. The move to a single general debate covering all agenda items, the adoption of new arrangements for the hearing of petitioners, eliminating the hearing of the same petitioners by both bodies, as well as the possible reconsideration by the Committee of draft resolutions submitted by the Special Committee, were particularly important measures. Texts dealing with central elements in the decolonization process, such as foreign economic interests or with programmes and activities affecting the socio-economic development of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, such as those of the specialized agencies, that had not attracted consensus were damaging to both the standing of the Special Committee and the interests of those Territories. The Australian delegation regretted that once again at the current session the language of the resolutions submitted was, in many cases, remote from the current political realities and the needs and concerns of the Territories.

53. Australia was a strong supporter of United Nations peace-keeping operations, and had therefore contributed a 45-strong signals corps to the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO). Australia called on the parties concerned to extend their full cooperation to the Secretary-General and his Special Representative in their efforts to overcome the difficulties encountered in proceeding with the implementation of the settlement plan. Under the rubric of assistance to Non-Self-Governing Territories, Australia provided education and training assistance to the inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories in its region, notably New Caledonia and Tokelau. In the financial year 1991/1992, that assistance had amounted to US$ 516,000. Further details of that assistance were contained in document A/47/486.

54. As a South Pacific nation, Australia attached particular importance to the situation in New Caledonia and fully associated itself with the remarks made during an earlier meeting by the Acting Permanent Representative of Solomon Islands on behalf of the member States of the South Pacific Forum. The decolonization of New Caledonia presented a particularly complex problem, requiring sensitivity, cooperation and good will from all parties involved. The interests of New Caledonia and of regional stability required a peaceful and orderly transition to genuine self-determination in which all options, including independence, would be open, and which would safeguard the rights of the indigenous Kanaks and those of all other New Caledonians. Australia had been much encouraged by the achievements recorded over the past four years under the Matignon Agreement, concluded in July 1988. A new political structure had been put in place, involving the devolution of powers from the central authorities to new provincial institutions. While many obstacles remained to be overcome, progress was being achieved with a view to creating a more harmonious political and socio-economic environment in which New Caledonians could duly exercise their right to self-determination. At the

(Mr. Griffin, Australia)

conclusion of his visit to New Caledonia in February 1992, the Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade had remarked on the evolution of attitudes and the prevailing spirit of common purpose. The growing pattern of exchanges between New Caledonia and neighbouring countries, including Australia, would help ensure that the Territory was fully integrated in the region. The Matignon Agreement was a framework designed to foster a favourable climate for New Caledonia's progress towards self-determination. It was therefore vital that the political commitment and good faith of the parties to the Agreement were constantly maintained. When the Agreement was reviewed in early 1993, the parties should take the opportunity to renew their commitment to ensuring that the spirit which had reigned in July 1988 was maintained and that New Caledonia's progress towards self-determination remained peaceful. The Australian delegation hoped that the draft resolution on New Caledonia, which had been adopted unanimously by the Special Committee, would be adopted by consensus.

55. Mr. VALEV (Bulgaria) said that over the past 47 years, the United Nations had played a major role in the decolonization process, as witnessed by the number of Member States, which had more than tripled since the inception of the Organization, largely owing to the attainment of independence by former colonial Territories. Such success was all the more remarkable in that it had been achieved in the context of the cold war. Bulgaria had always defended the fundamental right of peoples to self-determination, and would continue to participate actively in United Nations activities aimed at eliminating colonialism in all the dependent Territories. The international changes of recent years facilitated the creation of a new climate, and Bulgaria was convinced that the Fourth Committee and the other bodies concerned with decolonization should not only benefit from that new environment, but should also contribute to its establishment.

56. In order to enable all peoples to exercise their right to self-determination, there should be consensus on the issues concerning the dependent Territories. The United Nations was now being called upon to prevent such issues resulting in discord between North and South or between different entities within the South itself. In that respect, the international community should assume its legal and moral obligations.

57. The Fourth Committee and the other competent bodies of the United Nations should devote themselves to the specific problems of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. It was necessary to enhance cooperation between the administering Powers and the authorities of the Territories with a view to implementing appropriate programmes for developing infrastructures and for stimulating and diversifying economic activities. The specialized agencies could play an important role to that end through more active incorporation of the Territories in existing programmes and projects in areas such as environment, education and the prevention of drug trafficking.

(Mr. Valev, Bulgaria)

58. The Bulgarian delegation had, on many occasions, stressed the need to rationalize the work of the Special Committee on decolonization in conformity with the changes in the international situation. Its effectiveness would thus be enhanced, which would serve the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. Some progress had already been made in that direction.

59. At the same time, the Bulgarian delegation was disappointed by the texts of the draft resolutions on the implementation of the Declaration on decolonization by the specialized agencies and on foreign economic interests, as well as by the draft decision on military activities, contained in the report of the Special Committee. Those texts reflected past controversies and dealt with irrelevant issues. Such drafts would not improve the effectiveness of the Special Committee, or serve the interests of the peoples concerned. The Bulgarian delegation was ready to make its contribution if the Fourth Committee decided to establish a negotiating framework for the drafts in question. It favoured merging the Fourth Committee with the Special Political Committee, provided that it would not be detrimental to consideration of the items on their respective agendas.

60. Mrs. ASHIPALA (Namibia) said that the end of the cold war should accelerate attainment of the right of peoples to self- determination, while also making the work of the Fourth Committee even more relevant. The Namibian delegation welcomed the achievements of the Special Committee on decolonization. It would similarly welcome any changes in the Special Committee's methods of work which would add new impetus to its work.

61. Foreign economic activities which impeded implementation of the Declaration on decolonization were a matter of great concern. On the other hand, Namibia favourably viewed economic activities which benefited people in Non-Self-Governing Territories, being all too well aware that such activities should run parallel with the advancement of the people in those Territories.

62. Namibia commended the Organization of African Unity for having referred the question of violence in South Africa to the Security Council. It also strongly supported the involvement of the United Nations in South Africa. Namibia called on all parties to put an end to the violence; however, it was the primary responsibility of the South African Government to take prompt, decisive and concrete action to end the violence. Just as an end to violence was a prerequisite for the resumption of negotiations, the full dismantling of apartheid was a prerequisite for change.

63. With regard to Western Sahara, Namibia supported the right of the Saharan people to self-determination. Consequently, it endorsed the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Special Representative to remove all obstacles to the continuation of the peace process.

64. Mr. AYEWAH (Nigeria) said that despite the historic progress made, the United Nations had not yet achieved its objective of decolonization. The new opportunities created by the end of the cold war should facilitate implementation of resolution 1514 (XV) in the remaining Territories.

65. With regard to South Africa, the negotiations for a transition to a democratic non-racial society had been halted some three months earlier, giving reason for concern that the progress achieved so far was not irreversible. While apartheid laws had been abolished, their legacies persisted. Since the South African Government continued to deny the majority of South Africans the right to self-determination, its attitude should be condemned in all United Nations bodies, particularly the Fourth Commitee and the Special Committee against Apartheid.

66. His delegation commended the efforts so far made by the United Nations as well as the Organization of African Unity towards implementation of a settlement plan. The parties must scrupulously observe the cease-fire and abstain from any provocative behaviour that could hinder the plan's rapid implementation. It was to be hoped that the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Special Representative, assisted by minurso, would lead to the early holding of a self-determination referendum.

67. Considering that economic interactions between States must be mutually beneficial, he urged the administering Powers to promote the political, economic, social and educational advancement of the peoples in the dependent Territories and ensure that they could benefit from their natural resources and thus be viable as independent nations. His delegation was opposed to such abuses against some African countries, developing countries or Non-Self-Governing Territories as the dumping of consumer goods including hazardous waste on their soil. Those countries should not be used as havens for slush money and military bases.

68. The new world order should ensure freedom for all peoples, freedom from economic exploitation, aggression and underdevelopment.

69. Mr. Kember (New Zealand) took the Chair.

70. Mrs. KATABARWA (Uganda) welcomed the positive transformation of international relationships. Mistrust was giving way to dialogue, and the new mood would help the United Nations play its full role in promoting international peace and security. The decolonization effort was not complete, and the auspicious moment must be seized for applying resolution 1514 (XV) to the last Territories concerned. Petitioners heard by the Committee had emphasized the difficulties many of the Non-Self-Governing Territories faced. Such difficulties were not insurmountable, and the United Nations should define possible solutions to them.

71. She noted with regret that some issues needed to be revisited despite the spirit of consensus that had prevailed in the adoption of the relevant resolutions the previous year. With respect to Western Sahara, while

(Mrs. Katabarwa, Uganda)

reaffirming its support for the right to self-determination of the Saharan people, her delegation shared the views of the Secretary-General on the need for both parties to adhere to the cease-fire agreement. Security Council resolution 690 (1991) remained the basis for the resolution of the problem, and it was to be hoped that the referendum envisaged in the settlement plan could be held.

72. Uganda had been encouraged by the positive steps taken by President de Klerk towards the dismantling of apartheid in South Africa, but the major pillars of that policy remained in place. The South African Government had done little to stop the massacres during the recent flare-up of violence in the townships, which prompted doubts as to Mr. de Klerk's sincerity. Since the talks between the South African Government and the African National Congress had resumed, her delegation wished to call on all parties concerned to create an atmosphere conducive to peaceful and democratic change in South Africa. The international community should continue to exert pressure on the South African regime until the apartheid Constitution was replaced by one that guaranteed equal rights for all South Africans. The process of democratization must not be derailed. On the threshold of the twenty-first century, Member States must dedicate their efforts to the granting of independence to all colonial peoples, finally putting an end to that legacy of human indignity.

73. Mr. MWABULUKUTU (United Republic of Tanzania) said that the end of the cold war should facilitate the process of decolonization. More than 30 years after the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, there were still peoples under colonial domination. The fact that decolonization issues were still before the Fourth Committee should incite the international community to redouble its efforts to speed up the decolonization process. Namibia's presence in the Fourth Committee was an encouragement for peoples still aspiring to independence.

74. As there had been criticisms of the Committee on decolonization, his delegation wished to reiterate that that Committee must press on with its work until it had fully accomplished its mandate. It must certainly take account of the continually changing international environment, and had in fact done so. Over the preceding two years, several reforms had been introduced to streamline the work of the Committee on decolonization, which had, for instance, decided to present an omnibus resolution on all Non-Self-Governing Territories and to continue consideration of the question of apartheid in the light of developments in South Africa. The apartheid policy denied the majority of South Africans their right to participate in the affairs of their own country and so was tantamount to colonialism. Despite the criticisms levelled at it, the Committee on decolonization was therefore right to continue consideration of the question of apartheid.

75. With respect to Western Sahara, his delegation hoped that the obstacles encountered could be overcome rapidly and urged the parties to the conflict to

(Mr. Mwabulukutu, United Republic of Tanzania)

exercise restraint and cooperate fully with the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity in observing the cease-fire so as to enable early implementation of the settlement plan.

76. The peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories must be given a chance to exercise their right to self-determination and independence freely in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV). If the target of ending colonialism by the year 2000 was to be met, all concerned parties must show the necessary political will.

77. Lastly, his delegation was aware of the views expressed by some delegations that most of the activities of foreign economic interests, as well as military activities and other arrangements by colonial Powers could be beneficial to colonial peoples. However, as it had had occasion to point out, such benefits must be measured against those peoples' aspiration to attain freedom. Their efforts to realize that aspiration were what should guide the Committee's decisions. The fundamental changes that had recently taken place and so profoundly affected the international economic and political situation provided a favourable environment for accelerating the decolonization process.

78. The CHAIRMAN suggested that 6 p.m. on Thursday, 29 October should be the deadline for the submission of draft proposals or amendments relating to the recommendations of the Special Committee on the items on its agenda. He urged delegations to expedite their consultations on the draft proposals so that the Fourth Committee could complete its work as soon as possible, as scheduled.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.